

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 2, 2008. Claims 1, 2 and 4 to 10 are in the application, of which Claim 1 is the sole independent claim. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for his cooperation in reformulating the restriction requirement, such that Claims 1, 2 and 4 to 10 have received an examination on the merits. Claims 11 to 21, which were withdrawn from further consideration, have all been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without prejudice to Applicants' right to file a divisional application directed to these claims.

With respect to the Information Disclosure Statement submitted on May 9, 2006, Applicants have carefully checked the accuracy of the citation to EP 1,057,464. It turns out that this is a transcription error from the document that was intended, as cited in the International Search Report. The intended document was EP 1,057,644. A corrective Information Disclosure Statement is not being filed, however, since the Examiner has already cited and applied the intended document, as indicated by him at page 4 of the Office Action.

Formal objections have been lodged against the drawings. In response, a "Prior Art" legend has been inserted into both of Figures 11 and 12, and reference numerals have been corrected in Figure 10A. Approval of these drawings, and withdrawal of the drawing objections, are respectfully requested.

The requested change has been made to page 18 of the specification.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 to 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Europe 1,057,644 (Hirano), and Claims 8 to 10 were rejected further in view of U.S. Patent 5,523,780 (Hirosawa). As explained at pages 9 and 10 of the Office Action, Figure 44 of Hirano is believed to show an arrangement in which the interval between the supplying part for yellow ink and that for black ink is greater than the interval between supplying parts excluding that for yellow ink, such as the interval between supplying parts for magenta and cyan inks.

In response, Claim 1 has been amended in keeping with arrangements shown in the specification, such as that shown in Figure 10B and 10C, so as to specify that the interval between the specific supplying part and a supplying part “most closely” adjacent thereto is greater than the intervals between other supplying parts excluding the specific supplying part. In Hirano’s Figure 44, the supplying part most closely adjacent to the yellow supplying part is that of magenta ink. Thus, Figure 44 of Hirano does not meet the terms of amended Claim 1.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the claims herein define subject matter that is neither anticipated by nor would have been obvious from the applied art, and allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to
our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael K. O'Neill", is written over a horizontal line.

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